

**CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
STATE YOUTH COUNCIL
August 14, 2002**

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

On August 14, 2002, the State Youth Council of the California Workforce Investment Board convened in the Oakland Marriott Center City. The following persons were in attendance:

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ann Savage, Chair
Carl Wong, Vice Chair
Steve Arcelona
Jorge Ayala
Barbara Becnel
Ryan Berger
Ken Burt
Bernard Davitto
Myeshia Grice
Sonia Hernandez
Nellie McGarry
Milbrey McLaughlin
David Rattray
Hermalinda Sapien
Ariel Smoke
Dorothy Thompson
David Tos
Joseph Werner

STAFF

Paul Gussman, Deputy Director
Windie Scott, Chief Counsel
Janet Henner
Margaret Mack
John Merris-Coots
Suzette Smith
Ralph Vatalaro

Welcome and Opening Remarks

State Youth Council Chair Ann Savage called the meeting to order and welcomed all participants. Ms. Savage announced that she left her job at the Los Angeles Conservation Corps to accept a position with Mount San Antonio College.

Ms. Savage introduced Ms. Gay Plair Cobb, chair, Oakland Youth Council, and CEO,

Oakland Private Industry Council.

Ms. Cobb welcomed the State Youth Council to Oakland. She noted youth unemployment is a critical issue in Oakland and other California cities. In addition, youth struggle with problems such as homelessness, drug abuse, parenting, and physical safety. Ms. Cobb said that in response to these issues, the Oakland Youth Council developed a strategic plan. She noted voters in Oakland also recognized the importance of youth development when they approved a charter amendment in 1996 setting aside 2.5 percent of the city's general fund for youth services. Ms. Cobb emphasized the importance of engaging youth people in policy-making decisions within their communities. She encouraged the State Youth Council to continue providing leadership and advocacy for youth on a statewide basis.

Ms. Savage reported that the California Workforce Investment Board expressed strong support for the State Youth Council's activities at its last quarterly meeting. She noted the State Youth Council has formed a leadership team to help develop meeting agendas and begin a strategic planning process.

Deputy Director Paul Gussman noted the Workforce Investment Act reauthorization effort reflects an increasing emphasis on youth and economic development, with more flexibility being considered for states. He observed that the mandate for universal access needed to extend to youth as well as adults, so eligibility criteria may become broader and more inclusive with reauthorization.

Mr. Gussman reported that California has become a national leader in youth development. At a meeting in May of large states, California representatives presented information on the Youth Council Institute (YCi) and discussed the formation of the State Youth Council. Mr. Gussman noted a Department of Labor audit of WIA activities is likely to result in a commendation of the State Youth Council and YCi.

Mr. Gussman said the State Board approved a strategic plan at the last quarterly meeting, providing a road map for workforce development activities in California. He encouraged Council and audience members to review the document.

Mr. Gussman noted the new Labor and Workforce Development Agency, consisting of the Department of Industrial Relations, the Employment Development Department, the California Workforce Investment Board, and the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, was formally established. He said this agency would provide new opportunities to coordinate workforce preparation, economic development, and youth development within California. He added the staff would provide periodic updates on the new agency's progress.

Approval of April 18, 2002 Council Meeting Minutes

State Youth Council members unanimously voted to approve the April 18 minutes as submitted.

Discussion and Consideration of Mission Statement, Vision, and Values

Mr. David Tos reviewed the mission statement, vision statement, and key values developed by the Youth Involvement Work Group. State Youth Council members unanimously voted to approve the mission, vision, and value statements as presented.

Workgroup Discussion and Reports

Critical Youth Needs

Ms. Sonia Hernandez reported that the Critical Youth Needs Work Group began its deliberations by defining critical youth needs as the basic needs that are essential for all youth to survive, to thrive, and to develop competencies to succeed. In terms of survival, the work group identified basic food and shelter, supportive and caring relationships, and personal safety as key issues. Ms. Hernandez said the work group agreed that front-line providers of basic needs should include families, schools, community organizations, and institutions. In terms of helping youth thrive, the work group identified key components as cognitive, social, physical, emotional, and moral development.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed a series of recommendations proposed by the Critical Youth Needs Work Group. Recommendations included creating a statewide youth database, an annual report to the state, and broadening the definition of “youth” to include young people age 14 to 24; developing a statewide resource database for youth, along with marketing and dissemination of information; convening a leadership group to assist local youth councils with identifying funding sources; urging local youth councils to do resource mapping; developing better strategies to market one-stops; consulting with the One-Stop Certification Work Group to ensure that youth systems are being addressed; bringing major decision-makers in the state together around common priorities; establishing regional focus groups of service providers and youth; requesting eligibility waivers and offering stipends to encourage youth participation; encouraging local youth councils to include youth leadership, mentoring, soft skills training, and technology training in their requests for proposals from service providers; and sharing promising practices.

Mr. David Rattray suggested looking at Maryland’s “Ready by 21” plan as a model for youth workforce preparation programs. He also noted that Youth Opportunity grants might be a possible source of funding for stipends and other incentives.

Ms. Nellie McGarry cautioned that local youth councils, especially in rural areas, might lack the funding necessary to conduct resource mapping or gap analysis. She noted YCi has a Web page for youth practitioners that would be a good vehicle for sharing best practices information.

Mr. Joe Werner commented that the workforce investment area in Monterey conducted a series of focus groups over the past six months that yielded a wealth of information. He suggested looking at that material before convening additional focus groups. Mr. Werner expressed concern about expanding the definition of youth to the age of 24. Because of regulatory and legal constraints, he suggested it might be better to conform to existing definitions to avoid confusion. Mr. Werner supported the recommendation to market and

publicize one-stops. He recommended mandating that all one-stops provide certain services and facilities for youth rather than referring youth to other providers.

Mr. Steve Arcelona pointed out Job Corps programs are available for young people from age 16 to 24, so there are some precedents for a broader age range. He also noted the State Youth Council has already taken a step in gathering feedback from youth and providers through the two public hearings held in June.

Mr. Bernard Davitto emphasized the importance of relating whatever data is collected to basic needs and outcomes.

Mr. Tos supported the idea of providing stipends other than money to encourage youth to participate in programs, and he welcomed ideas from other Council members.

Mr. Jorge Ayala commented that the State Youth Council needed to use information to present a compelling case for youth development to decision-makers.

Ms. Barbara Becnel stated her program provides financial incentives to participants to assist with transportation costs. Mr. Tos noted transportation vouchers and tuition assistance might be effective incentives.

Ms. Dorothy Thompson commented that her program provides small amounts of cash as well as reimbursement for grocery bills, gasoline, and clothing.

State Youth Council members voted unanimously to accept the recommendations from the Critical Youth Needs Work Group.

Comprehensive Youth-Serving System

Mr. Rattray noted the State Board already approved the work group's recommendation to adopt the all-youth, one-system philosophy. He said a letter was drafted and sent to local youth councils and WIB's encouraging them to adopt the Youth Council Institute model as well. Mr. Rattray encouraged State Youth Council members to read the YCi newsletter for information on their activities and events. He added the work group discussed establishing a set of criteria as a prerequisite for local youth councils wishing to use the YCi all-youth, one-system logo.

Mr. Rattray said YCi has already launched a research project to look at the composition of one-stops and youth delivery systems statewide. He noted YCi has also developed a self-assessment tool that can be used by local youth councils to track their progress and identify areas needing more attention.

Mr. Rattray reported that the work group also discussed funding and capacity-building, and the staff will be working with EDD's capacity-building unit to provide more information. He emphasized the importance of interagency cooperation and top-level buy-in to coordinate statewide efforts and assist locals.

Mr. Gussman commented that a meeting with the Department of Education and other state agencies involved in youth issues and youth development has been scheduled for September 13. He noted this represents a milestone because there has been a notable lack of coordination previously.

There was consensus among State Youth Council members to accept the recommendations of the Comprehensive Youth-Serving System Work Group.

Workforce Investment Act Issues

Mr. Arcelona reported that the WIA Issues Work Group discussed the need for greater flexibility, waivers, and linkages to business. He noted the work group had not met since the last meeting, when a number of recommendations were approved. He said he was encouraged by Mr. Gussman's report earlier in the meeting about WIA reauthorization reflecting greater flexibility for locals.

Mr. Arcelona noted the work group discussed the possibility of expanding its members to include people not on the State Youth Council. He said input from interested parties has been extremely valuable to the committee.

There was consensus among State Youth Council members to accept the work group report.

Lunch Presentation

Mr. Arcelona introduced Ms. Liz Jackson-Simpson and Ms. Sheila Arcelona, San Francisco Juvenile Probation, and invited them to discuss the Youth Accountability Boards program.

Ms. Jackson-Simpson stated that 80 percent of the youth in the San Francisco Juvenile Probation system got into trouble because of economic need. She noted the juvenile justice system in San Francisco and other cities is plagued by overcrowding, disproportionate representation of minorities, and gang violence. In response, using money from the governor's 15 percent discretionary funds, San Francisco initiated a program of Youth Accountability Boards as an alternative to the conventional criminal justice system. She introduced Ms. Arcelona; Mr. Tony Litwak, Youth Accountability Boards Program Coordinator; and Ms. Tinisch Hollins, San Francisco Delinquency Prevention Commission, to elaborate on the program.

Ms. Hollins presented a series of overhead slides explaining the purpose of Youth Accountability Boards (YAB's), their history, status, and positive outcomes for communities. She said YAB's are community-based, collaborative groups that hold youthful offenders accountable for their actions. Based on principles of restorative justice, the YAB's provide opportunities for troubled youth to repair harm they caused and connect with community resources. Ms. Hollins listed some of the community-based organizations participating in San Francisco's Community Partnership Initiative (CPI).

Ms. Arcelona described the CPI as a cost-effective strategy that uses existing resources, volunteer power, and community stakeholders to hold youth accountable for their actions. She said Youth Accountability Boards pay equal attention to the needs of victims, offenders, and communities. By involving youth, families, and victims of crime, the YAB's work together to repair the harm done by crime and provide guidance and competency development to youthful offenders. Ms. Arcelona discussed a pilot project in the Bayview Hunter's Point neighborhood in San Francisco.

Mr. Litwak noted the Bayview Hunter's Point YAB meets in the early evening hours at the Bayview Hunter's Point Police Station to consider individual cases involving youthful offenders. He said board members are specially trained community volunteers and youth, and offenders are referred to the YAB from probation officers, judges, school officials, and case managers. He gave examples of typical YAB cases and their outcomes. Mr. Litwak said normal rules of evidence do not apply, and proceedings are relatively informal.

Mr. Werner noted restorative justice works well for property crimes; he asked if there were any long-term studies of its effectiveness for other types of crimes. Ms. Arcelona responded that studies have found that restorative justice systems work equally well for property crimes and personal crimes. She said recidivism is markedly reduced; only one offender in San Francisco's pilot project had been rearrested after going through the YAB process.

Ms. Karen Humphrey asked how restorative justice addresses the economic and family causes of youth crime. Ms. Jackson-Simpson replied that the YAB's help youthful offenders avoid criminal records and give them access to job training and employment.

State Youth Council members thanked the presenters for their information.

Public Comment

Ms. Diane Bush, coordinator, Young Worker Project, Labor Occupational Health Program, UC Berkeley, emphasized the importance of providing young workers with effective health and safety training as part of WIA-funded programs. She noted working safely should be one of the key competencies learned by youth as they enter the job market. She suggested referring this issue to one of the State Youth Council's work groups for further consideration and recommendations.

Workgroup Discussion and Reports (Continued)

Youth Involvement

Ms. Ariel Smoke reported on the activities of the Youth Involvement Work Group. She noted the group has been meeting frequently and working hard at a number of action-oriented recommendations. Ms. Smoke said recommendations from this work group include initiating an annual statewide youth conference to help identify youth leaders and obtain input from youth, find sources of funding, and recruit members for local youth councils; holding regional youth-led focus groups; and establishing a Youth Advisory Council. She noted Mr. Tos and Mr. Davitto have already volunteered to serve as mentors for the youth on the work group, and the State Youth Council previously approved a recommendation to make the work group a permanent subcommittee.

Ms. Milbrey McLaughlin suggested holding separate focus groups for youth of different ages to reflect differences in their concerns and issues.

Mr. Werner proposed Monterey as an ideal, centrally located place for a statewide youth conference.

Ms. Hernandez stressed that conferences are not successful unless they are reinforced with appropriate follow-up.

Ms. Becnel recommended working with the Youth Council Institute to develop effective conference curriculum and follow-up training sessions.

Mr. Werner suggested that the State Youth Council make an annual report at the conference on the status, progress, and implementation of past recommendations.

Ms. McGarry expressed concern about delaying establishment of the Youth Advisory Council until after the statewide conference. She recommended proceeding simultaneously instead. Mr. Rattray agreed. He urged the work group to move forward with the Youth Advisory Council parallel to the youth conference.

There was consensus among State Youth Council members to accept the work group report.

Public Comment

Ms. Valerie Leland, California Coalition for Youth, commended the State Youth Council for its efforts and urged them to do more to give youth a meaningful voice in important decisions.

Ms. Liz Jackson-Simpson, San Francisco Juvenile Probation, noted San Francisco is involved in a number of systems-building and capacity-building activities using funding from the Governor's 15 percent discretionary funds, WIA resources, and funding for mental health and substance abuse services. She said multi-disciplinary collaborative teams are essential in providing a full range of services to all youth, and she advocated greater systemic coordination.

Ms. Jackson-Simpson recommended simplifying and expanding WIA eligibility rules so more young people can be served. She suggested looking at waivers as well as loosening some of the existing requirements.

Mr. Richard Otto, Casey Family Programs, drew attention to the problems faced by youth leaving foster care and entering the workforce at age 18. He recommended recognizing the special needs of foster youth as part of the State Youth Council's activities.

Merced Youth to Youth to Success Conference Presentation

Ms. Andrea Baker, Private Industry Training Department and member of Merced County Workforce Investment Board, thanked all the people who helped plan and organize Merced's Youth to Youth to Success Conference.

Dr. Gary Derr said the purpose of the conference was to engage and empower youth serving on local youth councils and to assist adult members in recruiting and integrating youth onto local youth councils. He noted the key message coming from the conference was that youth can have a strong and powerful voice in the decisions affecting them and their communities.

Ms. Nadia LaVigne, Riverside County Council for Youth Development, commented that the conference was an extremely successful opportunity for youth to unite together and share ideas. She said workshop sessions featured youth leadership training, presentation and communication skills, integrating young people, making the voice of youth heard, and choosing and delivering a message. In particular, Ms. LaVigne noted, the conference pamphlet reflects the ideas, artwork, and input of the youth who participated. She thanked conference organizers for their efforts.

Ms. Jessica Monroy said that unlike many other conferences she had attended, the Merced Youth to Youth to Success Conference focused on obtaining input and ideas from youth. She added that she enjoyed all the conference activities and she thanked the conference sponsors.

Ms. Suzanne Nuñez read letters from three conference participants expressing their appreciation for the benefits they received from the conference.

Mr. Davitto noted that youth conferences can also benefit adults by educating and training them in listening to youth and integrating youth in decision-making. He commented that besides focusing on training youth, the State Youth Council should work on training adults. Dr. Derr commented that a number of the sessions and activities at the conference were aimed at helping adults better utilize young people on youth councils.

Ms. LaVigne advocated more mentorship programs so adult members of youth councils can work one-on-one with youth. She noted this would help boost youth participation and give young people valuable experience that could be used later in leadership roles.

Mr. Werner said Monterey County, with the assistance of its neighboring counties, would like to hold a youth conference with representatives from local high schools to discuss issues specific to each community. He also noted adults can do more to ensure that people hired to run youth programs are involved in leadership, mentorship, and youth development activities.

Dr. Carl Wong commented that the K-12 school system in California should be more involved in promoting youth leadership and youth development.

Public Hearing Report

Ms. Margaret Mack and Ms. Janet Henner discussed and summarized the results of the State Youth Council's two public hearings on June 25 and June 27. Ms. Mack said 31 individuals, representing local WIBs, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups, provided testimony. She drew attention to the summary of comments in the meeting packet.

Discussion Related to Development of a Comprehensive State Youth Plan

Mr. Steve Trippe, New Ways to Work, assisted State Youth Council members in developing a case statement supporting the need for a comprehensive state youth plan. He asked individual Council members to identify key problems and propose corrective actions. As problems, participants listed fractured and disconnected services, programs, and measuring systems; lack of unified information systems; and lack of broad youth representation. State Youth Council members and audience members then met in three separate groups to discuss the environment for creating a plan, including people, organizations, and funding sources; the plan itself, its purpose, audience, and content; and the process for developing and disseminating the plan.

Ms. Humphrey summarized the discussion regarding the plan environment. She said the group identified key people and organizations that should be involved in the plan, possible funding sources, existing resources and documents, and lessons from other efforts.

Mr. Trippe said the group discussing the plan itself talked about the need to influence policy, build an effective system, provide a format for local youth councils, and serve individuals with differing needs. He noted the group identified target audiences and agreed the plan should be reader-friendly, multi-lingual, and available in multiple formats. In terms of content, youth should have input, and the report should include information on best practices, programs in other states, what the law allows, and research. Mr. Trippe said the group also indicated the report should be both realistic and visionary, with a utopian call to action.

Ms. Virginia Hamilton reported that the process group talked about starting with an inventory of what is known and not known, identifying common issues, looking at other plans moving forward, and commissioning information studies and papers. She said the group recommended establishing work groups as stakeholders, developing clear expectations about how the report will be written, and developing multiple avenues for

gathering input and disseminating the report.

Mr. Trippe said he would work with the staff and leadership group to compile the results in a coherent format for the State Youth Council's review at the next meeting.

Other Business

Ms. Savage announced she would be leaving the State Youth Council and California Workforce Investment Board. She said she enjoyed her time and involvement but felt she needed to spend more time with her family. She promised to keep in touch and thanked staff and colleagues for their support.

Mr. Merris-Coots and Mr. Gussman expressed their appreciation and thanks to Ms. Savage. They commended her for her hard work and dedication and wished her well in the future.

Mr. Merris-Coots announced that the next State Youth Council meeting would be held in Long Beach on November 20.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.